United Nations A/67/803

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 March 2013

Original: English

Sixty-seventh session
Agenda item 45
Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Letter dated 15 March 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose a letter addressed to you from the Falkland Islands Government, dated 14 March 2013 (see annex). I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 45.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**

13-26374 (E) 200313

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 15 March 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Falkland Islands Government, the Hon. Michael Summers and Hon. Sharon Halford would like to present to you the results of the recent referendum on the future political status of the Falkland Islands.

A total of 99.8 per cent of those who voted decided to maintain the current constitutional arrangement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands Government. We believe this result is a clear and comprehensive expression of our wishes and very much hope that the United Nations will acknowledge and respect those wishes as the legitimate voice of the Falkland Islands people.

The founding principles of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) are clear on the primacy of respect for the principle of self-determination for all peoples. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) states that "All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development". This right is not qualified, and attempts to qualify it within the United Nations have been rejected.

Though we value our links to the United Kingdom, we are our own community, free to determine our political future. The referendum result makes it clear that we have no desire to be governed by Argentina. Continued harassment of our economic development and intimidation of those who want to do business with us and invest in the Islands will not change this fact. The more Argentina presses our small community, the harder will be our resolve.

Despite such pressure we, and the Government of the United Kingdom, remain willing to enter into dialogue with Argentina. Our differences should be discussed in a reasonable and constructive way. We favour cooperation and peaceful coexistence in the South Atlantic and there are many important issues that we can both usefully address together. Neither the Charter nor General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) support the concept of two large sovereign States negotiating away the rights of self-determination of the peoples of any territory. We therefore hope that the United Nations will agree that it is no longer credible to view this issue as primarily a dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina, over and above the wishes of the Falkland Islanders.

The Falkland Islands are discussed annually by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Special Committee on Decolonization) at the United Nations. In your address at the opening session of the Committee for 2013, you said that it was time for a new kind of inclusive dialogue about decolonization and that such dialogue required the constructive involvement of all concerned: the Special Committee, the administering Powers and the Non-Self-Governing Territories, working on a case-by-case basis. We agree that the Committee must engage more constructively with communities it considers as "colonies" and take their wishes into account. To that end we reiterate that we

consider it unusual that despite issuing annual resolutions on the supposed "colonial" nature of the Islands, neither the Special Committee nor its secretariat have ever visited the Islands in any official capacity. If the Special Committee on Decolonization wishes to engage in a new kind of dialogue then we consider it only right that the Committee have the opportunity to see the Falkland Islands and its people in person. Therefore, the open invitation issued on 7 December 2010 and circulated at the United Nations, for any current or future Chair of the Special Committee to visit the Falklands, remains open.

We ask you again to acknowledge our wishes as expressed clearly and definitively by our referendum.

(*Signed*) Gavin **Short**
On behalf of the Members of the
Legislative Assembly of the Falkland Islands